



# SACP Constitution: Definition and Rules

*Clauses 1 to 7*

The jewel of the [SACP Constitution](#) is **Rule 6.5**, which says:

*“Members active in fraternal organisations or in any sector of the mass movement have a duty to set an example of loyalty, hard work and zeal in the performance of their duties and shall be bound by the discipline and decisions of such organisations and the movement.*

*“They shall not create or participate in SACP caucuses within such organisations and the movement designed to influence either elections or policies.*

*“The advocacy of SACP policy on any question relating to the internal affairs of any such organisations or the movement shall be by open public statements or at joint meetings between representatives of the SACP and such organisations or the movement.”*

This means that SACP members active in any part of the mass movement, including the workers’ trade unions, and including

the ANC, do so in the utmost good faith.

SACP members serve the mass organisations on the terms of those organisations.

This clause is the backbone of the Alliance of the SACP with the ANC and COSATU, including COSATU's affiliates.

The rule means that SACP members can be trusted, and they are in fact trusted. It is because the mass organisations understand this rule that the alliance has been so solid, for so long.

### **Aims of communism**

The first aim (Rule 3.1) of the SACP is that:

*“The SACP strives to be the leading political force of the South African working class whose interests it promotes in the struggle to advance, deepen and defend the national democratic revolution and to achieve socialism.”*

What newly-inducted communists need to grasp, more than any other thing, is that the fruit of the work of the communists is born on other trees, and not in a private communist orchard.

The communists are concerned with what the non-communists are doing. The Party's business is to educate, organise and mobilise masses of people who are not communists. Among the SACP's “guiding principles” are the following:

*“4.2 Organise, educate and lead the working class in the*

*struggle for socialism and the more immediate objectives of defending and deepening the national democratic revolution and of achieving national and social emancipation. The main aim of the unfolding national democratic revolution is to complete the national liberation of the African people in particular and black people in general, to ensure the destruction of the legacy of white supremacy, and the strengthening of democracy in every sphere of life...*

*“4.3 Organise, educate and advance women within the working class, the poor and rural communities in pursuit of the aims of the SACP; and to raise the consciousness of the working class and its allies around the integral and oppressive nature of gender relations within South African capitalism.”*

The Communist Party is not a sect. It has no interests separate from those of the working class. The working class, as the most advanced class, represents the best interests of the entire society. As the vanguard of the working class, and via the working class, the Communist Party is the vanguard of the nation.

By its constitution, therefore, SACP members are bidden to mix with and to partake in the political life of the whole population, outside of the Communist Party itself. The Party's rules tell you how to behave when you are doing so.

This concern with the ways and means of SACP work within the broad movement will continue throughout our Induction course.

## **Mastering the SACP Constitution**

The SACP Constitution, as a whole, is a model of how a constitution needs to be written. It is as brief as it can be, and as direct as it can be. Where necessary, it is sufficiently detailed. It is a very fine document, of which SACP members can be justly proud.

The attached brief document contains clauses 1 to 7 of the SACP Constitution. The next item will carry the remainder of the clauses (8 to 26).

Broadly, clauses 1 to 7 contain the political prescription for the Party, and the distinguishing features of the Party, while the remainder describes the Party's structure.

Clause 7 enables the establishment of the Young Communist League of South Africa (YCLSA) - the autonomous youth organisation of the SACP. We will return to the YCL in more detail in a later part of this Induction course.

- The above is to introduce an original reading-text: [SACP Constitution, Definition and Rules, 2012](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).